

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

<h1 style="margin:0;">FSIS NOTICE</h1>	84-06	12/5/06
--	-------	---------

CONTACTING THE TECHNICAL SERVICE CENTER

I. PURPOSE

The TSC has made changes to improve its service as a resource to Agency personnel, industry, and other constituents. FSIS conducted an evaluation of the services provided by the TSC, and the TSC has begun to make improvements in response to the evaluation. The improvements include timely and consistently reliable answers to e-mail questions, a better phone system and more attention to the needs of small and very small plants. This notice provides information on the improvements that the TSC has made in its services.

II. E-MAIL

In order to ensure the best service, the TSC encourages Agency personnel, industry, and other constituents to send questions in an e-mail to TechCenter@fsis.usda.gov, with a contact phone number in the e-mail. The e-mail question should include details and facts related to the question. Including this information will help the TSC to provide prompt and accurate responses to the inquiries it receives.

A staff officer will send an e-mail or make a return call within 24 hours to discuss the answer. If the staff officer needs more information to answer the question, or if the staff officer believes that a joint call with in-plant FSIS and industry personnel would be beneficial, he or she will advise the questioner of this fact.

III. UPDATED TELEPHONE SYSTEM

For those choosing to call, the TSC has updated the telephone system to a menu driven format. Callers are notified, through a series of menu and sub-menu options, how to reach the most appropriate contact for their question. Staff members are available Monday through Friday, 6:00 am to 5:00 pm (CT) to assist customers. The TSC is closed on federal holidays. Callers may reach the TSC after hours, in the case of an emergency, by calling the main number and leaving a message with the

DISTRIBUTION: Inspection Offices; T/A Inspectors; TSC; import offices	NOTICE EXPIRES: 1/1/08	OPI: OPPED
--	-------------------------------	-------------------

answering service.

The TSC receives calls at (402) 344-5000 or toll free at (800) 233-3935. Callers will hear the following menu options to reach:

- **OPPED TSC:** Press 1 then follow the sub-menu as listed below:

Sub-menu

- **Small Plant Outreach Team** — Press 1

NOTE: The TSC has formed a special group of staff officers to receive and respond to inquiries from managers and owners of small and very small establishments, and from inspection program personnel at those establishments, regarding questions on the implementation of HACCP, Sanitation SOPs, and other technical and regulatory issues. These staff officers will make an extra effort to meet the needs of small and very small plants.

- **Exports** – Press 2

NOTE: The message informs callers about meat, poultry, or egg product exports, how they can obtain export information from the FSIS web site (www.fsis.usda.gov), or to speak to an Office of International Affairs staff officer.

- **Labeling, Standards of Identity, and Use of Ingredients** —Press 3

NOTE: The system redirects the caller to the Labeling and Consumer Protection Staff in Washington. This change will help to ensure prompt and consistent answers to labeling questions. LCPS can also be contacted directly via E-mail at: FSIS.Labeling@fsis.usda.gov

- **TSC staff member** — Press 4

- **TSC receptionist** — Press 0

- **For OPEER**— Press 2 using the main menu
- **For OPHS, Foodborne Disease Investigations Branch**— Press 3 using the main menu
- **For OFO, EIAO**—Press 4 using the main menu
- **For OIA, Internal Audit Staff** – Press 5 using the main menu
- **For other FSIS staff** —Press 6 using the main menu

IV. Phone Call

The TSC will document the questions received from callers as well as the answers provided by the responding TSC staff officer. In order to provide the best possible customer service and to ensure that there is an accurate record of the call, the TSC will expect the caller to provide his or her name, phone number, establishment name and number, and email address. Without this information, the TSC will not be able to supply specific information to the caller, such as policy clarification or follow-up information.

Whenever possible, if multiple parties (e.g. IIC, FLS, plant management) have an interest in the question, all parties should be present on the call. With all parties on the call, the TSC can address the concerns of all the participants at one time and will help to prevent misunderstandings or confusion, as much as possible.

Contact the TSC with questions or for more information.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary S. Dwyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mary" being the most prominent part.

Assistant Administrator
Office of Policy, Program, and Employee Development